

BOROUGHBRIDGE MAYOR'S DIARY
Councillor Geoff Craggs's Weekly Diary

9 December 2011

Last Wednesday was Boroughbridge's late night shopping evening, which turned out to be one of the best yet- the weather was fine, if a touch on the cool side, which made the hot food and drink being so generously offered by many of the traders very welcome, not forgetting the roast chestnuts being dispensed by the Scouts and the hot soup ladled out by Community Care. It was heart-warming to see so many people popping in and out of the shops along St. James' Square, High Street, Fishergate, Horsefair and as far as Newby Farm Shop, finding out how much we have to offer in the very individual shops of Boroughbridge and also admiring many very attractive window displays. One of our Mayoral duties was to judge the best window display- not an easy task as they were all so brilliant, but we did reach a decision which will be revealed at Carols on the Square on Sunday evening the 11th., which starts at 3.30 with a procession from St. James' Church after the Christmas Tree Festival- the winners of which will also be announced at the carol service, I understand. There-advance notice, which will be repeated next week! If any of you who were in Boroughbridge for the Open Evening thought you had possibly exceeded your quota of mulled wine whilst doing the rounds, you DID see two reindeer strolling down High Street- they were enjoying "time out" from their duties at Newby Farm Shop, much to the delight of everyone, especially the children, From the Lions' Santa's Sleigh in St.James' Square to the newly moved Boroughbridge Hardware premises in Horsefair the town was jam-packed with people, all enjoying themselves. Very many thanks to everyone from our local organisations who worked so hard preparing for and running a very successful event; particular thanks to the young musicians, instrumental and vocal, from the High School and Queen Ethelburga's, who support our town so loyally.

On Thursday the 1st. December the quarterly joint parish council meeting took place; these meetings of our local councils are invaluable for exchanging information and presenting a united front when dealing with matters which are of common concern- the current most serious problem being the planned waste unit and incinerator at Allerton Park. None of the parish councils around and including Boroughbridge has received current plans for this development from NYCC, despite our having raised concerns at the initial consultation stage. This is unfortunately symptomatic of the way in which County is apparently "hell bent" on pushing this very controversial and extremely costly scheme through. We are here, it is our money as taxpayers of North Yorkshire who will be paying for it and my personal view is that the scheme should be "called in" by Government now, and an independent inquiry held into the viability of the proposal on both financial and environmental grounds. With so many residents and local councils throughout our county being opposed to the Allerton Park project alarm bells must be ringing violently in Whitehall, even though they appear to have had a cushion placed over them at County Hall!

On Saturday the 3rd. we opened the St. James' Church Christmas Fair; the morning was cold and blustery, but it did not appear to have stopped people attending, and I think the Church will have raised some much needed funding- I certainly hope so, for as with all local events, an awful lot of work goes into making them happen.

Today (Monday the 5th) Betty and I went up to the Primary School to meet the Headteacher and two of the three children who designed notices asking dog owners to pick up their pets' "droppings". We spent a very cold half hour fixing them, and hope that the efforts of these youngsters will shame offending dog owners into obeying the law- for it is most definitely illegal to allow a dog to "poop" and not pick up after it. Sadly there is still a massive problem with dog fouling in Boroughbridge and the surrounding villages; only last week a resident complained that after dark she had to walk in the centre of the road in New Row because she couldn't see the excrement on the pavement; similarly, the green lane opposite the school entrance on Aldborough Road is badly fouled and the contractor who cuts the grass in the Back Lane picnic area has given warning that he may not be prepared to cut it in future because after the last cut his clothing was covered with excrement thrown up by his mower. Not many dog owners are irresponsible or arrogant enough not to clean up after their pets; to those who are offending, please realise the untold harm you are doing and clean up after your dogs.

